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Inspires Drowning Prevention Message Across Two County Lines

From the inspiration of a young man and his Eagle Scout project, a major drowning and water injury prevention effort among community volunteers, safety officials and seven community agencies in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties started the summer with a splash. The project aimed at decreasing the number of deaths and injuries of children through age 5, began when Taylor Porter, a boy scout from Apple Valley, learned of a need for drowning prevention in his own High Desert Community.

Porter began working with the San Bernardino County Drowning Prevention Network, a collaboration of fire, law enforcement, and community members who work together to promote safety and injury prevention of children.

Porter's project consisted of sharing the water safety message in his hometown area where 4 deaths were reported from drownings last year. Porter and his peers will be informing all families with pools in the Hesperia area of the importance of the ABC's of water safety: Active Adult Supervision; Barriers; Classes & Preparation.

The collaboration of partners to take Porter's community project and expand it over two counties include First 5 San Bernardino, First 5 Riverside, SafeKids, the Drowning Prevention Network, Injury Prevention Services of Riverside County, and 2-1-1 of Riverside and San Bernardino Counties.

At a special event at Loma Linda University's Drayson Center on Wednesday, Dr. Shamel Abd-Allah, M.D., PICU Medical Director of Loma Linda University Children's Hospital spoke to attendees about the extreme dangers children face when submerged for even just a few seconds. He reminded the listeners of the consequences of lack of active supervision and the need for families to take CPR classes. Porter also spoke at the event sharing the message he will be sharing with his neighbors.

For more information on keeping kids safe and healthy, visit www.first5safety.com or dial 2-1-1. Scouts interested in doing a similar project to Porter's can find the information at www.first5safety.com.